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| |  | | --- | | Each week, some of our Councillors and interns share a selection of articles, analytical pieces, videos and podcasts about what is happening in the world of international affairs. This week, our Councillors explore the future of globalisation, the role of ASEAN in Biden's administration and the concept of an "unbroken India".  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors and interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |

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| |  | | --- | | Graphical user interface, website  Description automatically generated | | [**What does "ASEAN Centrality" mean to the Biden Administration?**](https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/is-the-biden-administration-serious-about-asean-centrality/)  The notion of “ASEAN Centrality” has been repeatedly mentioned by the Biden administration as a principle that will be upheld in his term. Xirui Li in The Diplomat [**unpacks**](https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/is-the-biden-administration-serious-about-asean-centrality/) the implications of this idea that describes ASEAN as a regional leader or driver. He makes clear that Biden’s public support for the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific demonstrates the administration’s respect for ASEAN’s agenda-setting ability. This could indicate ASEAN’s influence on how the US implements its own regional strategy. Li describes the historic US-ASEAN Special Summit, which marked the first time the leaders of ASEAN member states were invited to the US capital as a group. The indication that Biden’s administration is treating ASEAN as an institutional collective is reinforced by the acknowledgement of ASEAN as an important platform for communication. As Biden made clear in a 2021 address ASEAN is ‘a linchpin for maintaining the resilience, the prosperity and security of our shared region’.   However, Li also highlights several challenges that may indicate this principle is more symbolic than practical for the Biden administration, including the ‘too-small’ economic investment and the lack of detail in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. Further challenges, such as the lack of US ambassador to ASEAN and the emphasis on bilateral engagements, undermine the strength of ‘ASEAN centrality’. The increasing emphasis on the Quad has also sparked concerns that ASEAN may be marginalised in the effort to create a Quad-based framework of regional cooperation. While the Biden administration has taken steps to support the centrality of ASEAN, Li concludes that the upcoming Quad leaders’ summit will be a useful opportunity for the US to address these concerns and to understand if the US is serious about “ASEAN centrality”.  Image credit: [**Freddie Everett**](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:President_Biden_and_Deputy_Secretary_Sherman_Participate_in_the_U.S.-ASEAN_Special_Summit_(52071409173).jpg) | |

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| |  | | --- | | A person in a suit sitting at a table with a microphone  Description automatically generated with low confidence | | **The World Ignored Russia's Delusions. It shouldn't make the same mistake with India.**  For decades, India’s Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)—the Hindu nationalist organization with close links to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)—has put forward the [**idea**](https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/05/08/india-akhand-bharat-hindu-nationalist-rss-bjp/?utm_source=PostUp&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=FP%20This%20Week&utm_term=42535&tpcc=FP%20This%20Week) of Akhand Bharat or an “unbroken India.”  The proposed entity stretches from Afghanistan on India’s western flank all the way to Myanmar to the east of India as well as encompassing all of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself has mentioned the idea: in a 2012 interview, when he was still the chief minister of Gujarat, he argued that Akhand Bharat referred to cultural unity. Sushant Singh in Foreign Policy argues that this idea should be engaged with seriously, not dismissed offhand as the 'fantasies of an old man'.   Image credit: [**Presidencia de la República Mexicana**](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Visita_Primer_Ministro_de_la_Rep%C3%BAblica_de_la_India,_Narendra_Modi_(27519473456).jpg) | |

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| |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors, we invite our interns to share with you what they have found insightful or interesting in the world of international affairs over the past week. This week, our interns Sachin Khunte and Rebecca (Yancheng) Zhang explore Russia's challenges in achieving its technological sovereignty and China's role at the UN, respectively.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors and interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |

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| |  | | --- | | A person with his hand on his chin  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | [The challenge to the Russian goal of technological sovereignty](https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/putins-internet-plan-dependency-with-a-veneer-of-sovereignty/) Wilde and Sherman, in their piece in the Brookings Institute, [**discuss**](https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/putins-internet-plan-dependency-with-a-veneer-of-sovereignty/) Russia's human capital flight in the technology industry in the face of rising sanctions, government repression, and increasing isolation from the world. This, according to the writers, affects Russia's goal of achieving technological sovereignty and an independent domestic internet ecosystem and is leading Moscow into techno-isolationism. The writers suggest that the war in Ukraine has further solidified Russia's isolation from the West in terms of technology, which is likely to make Russia more reliant on China for its technological needs, especially with semiconductors. Nevertheless, to prevent IT specialists from leaving the country, President Putin created a new commission over internet and technological sovereignty in April and made former President Dmitry Medvedev its head. The writers call this initiative of saving the Russian technology industry 'tupik', which means 'dead end', and argue that the biggest challenge for Russia is the brain drain. Putin's insistence on creating an independent Russian internet and technology industry is challenging and other factors have pushed out many IT professionals. The writers argue that the US should capitalise on this trend and absorb Russian talent.  Image credit: [**Just Click's With A Camera**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/153352659@N03/52068238603/in/photolist-2nk6kiM-2n3AHWT-2n5Ksct-2neu7cu-2n3Kot3-2n67pNa-2n4r8BN-2n3WuwM-2n45Bqh-2n4gF57-2n3nE6m-2n6yijV-2mW4xkk-2nkMfqu-2ndCKVL-2n63HEG-2nfz2Zf-2mEWd4n-2jmk8xM-WTL26z-mroshj-2n6KXPX-2n7Eeep-2nbzwnv-2njFVnt-2n63VpH-2n8GWpB-2n66UE8-2neSMXR-2n6ckCV-2n7SfTA-2jxsLw7-2jxw5XY-2jxw5XN-A7UCwK-2nfuVnf-2jHSXME-2jxsLBC-2meGd8M-2n8dEhv-Hxfwtg-2n8LSZ3-2niXwjn-4xbP2C-2nadUdv-22RcPQm-2navbjt-2ng9rRA-2gbW8Qo-2ndi2ro) | |

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